

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, September 30. 1707.

IN examining what we have to be dejected at in the Affair of Toulon, I cannot but think, it may be useful to examine that Negative Victory of the French; and to introduce it, I shall tell you a Story.

Two young Ladies, who had miscarry'd in their Love Affairs, met together very disconsolate and discourag'd, full of Tears, Resentment, and all the Excesses of unfortunate Amours, and began to tell their Grievs to one another.

One complain'd with great Bitterness, that she had fix'd her Fancy upon a young Gentleman of extraordinary Merit, Fortune and Gallantry; that she had try'd all the Arts and Stratagems, that Wit and Love could invent—To make him her own; nay, she had taken such a low Step, as to let

him discover that she lov'd him, *the Lady saying a Lady ought to do by the Way*; that altho' her Charms, all her Friends, all her Arts, tho' she was rich, and as she thought not an unsuitable Match for him, and had some Share of Beauty too, were so far from prevailing, that they had only assist'd to her Misfortune, and brought him to reject her with Rudeness and Contempt; that this had made her distracted, and she talk'd of nothing but starving, or hanging, or drowning her self.

Ah, Madam, says the other Lady, your Case is nothing at all to mine; you are come off safe; and have preserv'd your Honour; you have Wealth and Charms sufficient; and if this Gentleman has slighted you, you will obtain his Bitter perhaps, or at least his Equals: But I am a poor disconsolate

solate Creature, no Body can match my Case; for I having fix'd my Hopes on an Object, that I prefer'd to all my Happiness, I went so foolishly far to gain my Purpose, that I was not only slighted and contemned, but the unkind Despisers rifled me of all my Estate, plunder'd me, and to complete my Misery, despoil'd me not of my Honour only, for I sacrific'd all to his Power, but has perfectly strip'd me of all, Estate, Jewels, Chastity, and every thing; and now I am turn'd loose to Repentance and Despair. Now, Madam, compare your Case and mine, and there is no Manner of Proportion; You come off only with a Disappointment, and a Negative upon your Affection; I am effectually and irrecoverably undone, ruin'd in Honour, Estate, and my Despair made most rational.

The First of these Ladies upon this Discourse went away comforted, and pitying her Friend; for, said she, I see, all Sorrows are little or great, but as they are compared with others, which are real and substantial.

'Tis hard, that a Story so plain as this should need Explication; but to bring it Home, Gentlemen, to our Case, the Confederacy courted a Lover, one Monsieur Thoulon, who, it seems, has rejected her, and as *proffer'd Passions court Contempt*, has insulted her Fondness, and cast her off with very unmannerly Treatment—And the poor Lady with Shame and Disappointment is running into Despair—No, no, Madam, pray think a little, and do but look upon a certain Lady in your Neighbourhood, one Mrs. Gallia, she met with a sad Disaster in her Love, ten thousand times worse than yours; for she made her Passion known to an Italian Gentleman, one Seignior Torino, and he like a true Italian made her believe, he design'd to return her Affection, and treat her as a *Cavaliere*; but having gotten her Maiden-head, and fully satisfy'd himself with her Person, he not only contemned her, and us'd her very ill, but one Day as she was going from him, set a Parcel of his rude Companions upon her, and they abus'd her, ravish'd her, took away all her Jewels and Cloths, and sent her Home naked, deflowred and undone. Now pray, Madam, compare your Case with this

Mrs. Gallia, and see, which of you two has the most Reason to despair. Let us then come a little to these two Ladies, and examine their Conduct under their several Circumstances.

And first for Madam Gallia, she came out of the Hands of her cruel Ravishers, in the utmost Confusion, Terror, Fright, Amazement, and almost distracted with Anger, Horror and Distress, as indeed she had Reason to do; she fled a long Way, before she so much as look'd behind her, and in short she never ceas'd running, till she got into her own Country, and among her own Relations, who receiv'd her kindly, and endeavour'd to comfort her.

When she was got hither, like a Woman of Sense and Spirits, she recollected her self a little, took some time to recover the first Fright and Disorder of her Spirits, and then immediately address'd her self to the proper Remedies to recover her Losses of the Robbers, and be reveng'd on the barbarous Treatment of her Lover; and this she has pursued with so much Vigilance and Application, such undaunted and indefatigable Resolution and Labour, that she has very much re-establish'd her self, and restored her Reputation in the World, and is not without some Prospect of gratifying her Revenge upon her Enemy, tho' not so easily upon his Assistants who ris'd her, and made her run Home in such a Condition as is related.

As for the other Lady, SHE, tho' her Misfortunes consisted chiefly in her disappointed Passions, and some Negatives upon her Amours, and that she came off with little Loss, either to her Honour or Estate; for tho' some Assaults were made upon her Modesty, yet she defend'd her self, so as not to have her Person insulted—Yet this poor Lady, I say, is so dispirited, so cast down, and dejected, that she is quite comfortless and desponding—And this is not all; but she has light on a Parcel of her low spirited Acquaintance, and they instead of comforting and cherishing her in her needful Affliction, make her ten times worse than she was before—They run about her, bewailing and bemoaning her, crying out she's undone and lost, and that her Honour

Honour is blasted, that she will never recover her self, and the like.

Now, pray beloved Friends, what must be done in this Case? Indeed here is no Remedy as I know of, but to take these Phlegmatick Friends of her's away from her, and put some of them into a Mad-house a little, and put People about her, that may talk Reason to her, and tell her, how to be revenged of her unkind Lover.——And I warrant you in a little while, the Woman will be comforted, and come to her self again, and then let Her alone to be even with him; for as my Lord Rochester says,

*A Woman's no're so ruin'd, but She can
Revenge her self on her Undoer, MAN.*

In vain are all the Allegories in the World without suitable Application; I think, the Case of these two Ladies will very well suit the two Attempts of *Thoulon* and *Turin*.

Go to the French, thou Coward! Like Solomon's Sluggard to the ANT, learn there, never to despair, never to sleep; Fear is an unapplying, and Grief an unprofitable Passion; if there is a Loss, if there

is a Disappointment, learn of them how to repair it, how to raise your Resolution, as your present Prospects decline, and make up with Diligence and Application, what has been lost by Neglect or Disappointment.

To repine, despond, and grow stupid under a Loss, is to open the Door to another, and another, and so to Destruction; he that despairs, dyes by his own Choice, when he may live, and takes both his Hands, and leads them to his Enemy to destroy him with.

I shall spend no Time here to show, that there is no Reason for our Discouragements, or to have us be under any general Dejection, the very Historical Narration of things will do it of course.——But I must go a little nearer the Quick, and still come to an Examination, which perhaps may be more odd, *Viz.* Whether the Fact be true or no; whether there is really any thing in it, that we are dejected at these things; whether it is not a meer Chymera, a Plot upon us, a Suggestion formed to discourage the People, and spread abroad by those that would have it be true.

MISCELLANEA.

WOE, Woe, Woe, and Alas! Who can help crying out, *Grief in one Hand, and Sorrow in t'other*—What are we all a coming to?——Alas, poor Authors, O the mighty Fall upon the Price of Wit! Learning is sold by Out-cry, and Wisdom by Inch of Candle; not for who bids most, but just the contrary, to who bids least; who'd preach Sermons, and print them by this or that Friends Importunity, nay, tho' it were by Order of both Houses, or by the Royal Authority, or which is mightier still by my L—M—'s Order.

Now, Brethren, Authors, Writers, Scribes, Printers, Publishers, Pamphleteers, Monthly-Account Men, Learned Observators, nay even down to the unlearned Reviewer; was ever such hard Fortune, would any Body spend their Learned Labours on this ungrateful World?

Well, what's the Matter now? O Matter enough, read *Post Boy, September, 6. N^o. 1920*, and I know not how many *Post-Boys* beside—A new Pamphlet Merchant set up, Old *Will Millers* Ghost reviv'd with his *Lanthorn and Candle*, so which there hangs a Tale known well enough in *Little-Britain* and *Duck-Lane*—But this is not the Grievance, 'tis the Price is the Lamentation—And behold the curious Collection is expos'd to Sale, as follows, at *White-Fryers Gate*.

1. Sermons, one Shilling and Six-pence per Dozen, monstrous! The Labours of the Clergy come down to three Halfpence a Piece—Who would study, who preach, and worst of all who print to be so stock-jobb'd into the World?—In the next Place Sermon-Reading will be very cheap, and the inferior Clergy may serve the People,

as some of Old did the Almighty, with that which cost them naught, or next to it, and perhaps may be worth as little according to Custom—*Three Half-pence a Piece!* Was ever Divinity brought to such a Market! But to go on. 2. Lives and Memoirs, 4 s. 3. Travels at 4 s. 4. Husbandry and Trade, 4 s. 5. Plays, at 6 s. per Dozen. 6. Poetry, at 2 s. per Dozen.

Miserable! Sermons *Pigle-de-Pigle-de*; no Distinction; not the Bishop distinguish'd from the Curate, not the Orthodox from the Heretick, not the Conformist from the Schismatick, not the Learned from the Lunatick, all of a Price.

Again, Poetry, alas for Wit! Two-pence a piece from the highest to the lowest; here's no manner of Distinction between a Psalm-Book or a Ballad, betwixt B—s Divine Paraphrase, or R—fs bawdy Ramble, even from *Dryden's* inspired *Abraham* to the Parable of the Magpyes; no Distinction at all, no Difference made between T—s

sublime *Forreigners*, and the Dogrel *True-Born-English-man*——All go at a Price, 2 d. a piece; hard Fate of Wit, Gentlemen—But one thing may comfort the poor Poets, they stand advanc'd above the Sons of the Prophets; and Poetry, Thanks to the Wits of this Age, bears a better Price than Divinity, by a half-penny in 2 d.

But here is still more Comfort in all our Distress too; see the List, *Plays* six Shillings per Dozen, hopeful still; a Sign the Age has some Taste, they can relish something; Sermons are dull Things, and Poetry has a great Deal of Flatness; but a Play, O *Camilla!* O *Love for Love!* O the *Boarding-School!* O *Greenwich Park!* they have something so palatable in them, so luscious, they are worth six-pence a piece, and the Town cannot be without them; of which I shall give some more Reasons hereafter, mean time take a Touch by the by out of a few old Lines new dish'd up, they are not enough to surfeit you.

Let him whose Fate it is to write for Bread,
Keep this one Maxim always in his Head;
If in this Age he would desire to please,
He must not cure but nourish their Disease.
Dull Moral Things will never pass for Wit,
Some Tears ago they might, but now's too late;
Virtue's the faint green Sickness of the Times;
'Tis luscious Vice gives Spirit to all our Rhimes.

W—y with Pen and Poverty beset,
And B——re rich in Physick and in Wit;
Tho' thou of Jesus, that of Job may sing,
One bawdy Play will twice their Profits bring.

In vain a sober Thing inspir'd with Wit,
Writes Hymns and Histories from Sacred Wit;
But let him Blasphemy and Bawdy write,
The Pious and the Modest both will buy it;
The blushing Virgin's pleas'd, and loves to look,
And plants the Poem next her Prayer-Book.